(c) Since foreign investments in Telecom Sector is a market driven phenomenon depending on the investors, no specific reason can be given for the same.

(d) The Government Policy is neutral with regard to the use of a technology by the access services providers.

Interference on the role of TRAI on ADC

939. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there have been disputes between TRAI (regulator) and DoT (licensor) on the issue of Access Deficit Charges (ADC);

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether it is a fact that ADC related problems are being handled by TRAI as concept of ADC was introduced/reviewed by them; and

(d) if so, the reasons that DoT is interfering in the role of TRAI on ADC?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, the Government had sought comments of TRAI on proposed directions under Section 25 of TRAI Act 1997 on the issue of Access Deficit Charge.

(c) and (d) ADC was prescribed by TRAI in January, 2003 and implemented from Ist May, 2003.

As per the Government policy, access to telecommunications is of utmost importance for achievement of the country's social and economic goals. Availability of affordable and effective communications for the citizens is at the core of the vision and goal of the telecom policy.

The Access Deficit Charge arises out of tariff rebalancing exerice for providing affordable and effective communications to the citizen. Department of Telecommunications is responsible for formulation and implementation of telecommunication policies in the country and therefore DoT is not interfering with the role of TRAI on ADC.

Profit/Loss of MTNL

940. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that from January, 2006 telephone calls from North to South and East to West in the country shall be local calls;

(b) if so, the details of loss/gains to be obtained by telephone department in the country;

(c) how far the common man shall be benefited; and

(d) what shall be a call charge to meet loss of STD calls?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEELAHMAD): (a) One India involves a series of steps with a final objective of uniform and reduced call rates across the country. Although efforts are being made to implement it from January, 2006 but no date has been notified as yet.

(b) and (c) With the reduced call rates, common man is expected to avail the benefit of cheaper services on long distance calls. The exact impact of loss/gain has not been estimated.

(d) At present no call charges has been prescribed to meet the loss of STD calls.

Irregularities on providing the PCO sets in Rajasthan

†941. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a great deal of difficulty is being experienced in getting PCO connection at panchayat levels in rural areas of Rajasthan;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is also a fact that irregularities are also being committed in the matter of quality of sets provided while giving new connections; and

(d) if so, what action has been taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEELAHMAD): (a) and (b) In Rajasthan, 9,839 villages are without the facility of Village Public Telephones (VPTs) as on 30.09.2005 (this excludes villages having population less than 100, villages lying in thick forest areas etc.). These villages will be provided VPTs progressively by November, 2007. In such cases, provision of PCO at Panchayat level experience difficulty because of the current lack of supporting infrastructure.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

†Original notice of question was received in Hindi.